
**PRESIDENT'S REPORT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 24, 2021**

eat[™] Academy of Nutrition
right. and Dietetics

Following are activity highlights since our May meeting.

Academy's 2021-2022 Leaders

It was my honor and pleasure to begin my term June 1 as the Academy's 2021-2022 President, when our elected leaders for 2021-2022 took office. My deep thanks to Linda Farr for her leadership and mentorship during the past year. Together we continued virtually the Academy's annual tradition of "[passing the gavel](#)" – commemorating the transfer of the Academy's presidency from one year to the next.

New Academy Spokespeople: 2021-2024 Term

The Academy welcomed three new [Spokespeople](#) and reappointed four to serve for the 2021-2024 term beginning June 1. The Academy's national volunteer spokesperson network consists of 29 RDNs who conduct thousands of nutrition and healthful eating interviews on behalf of the Academy each year with print, broadcast and online media.

Reimagining Our Governance Structure

To inform members and seek input on the Academy's proposed reimagined governance structure, we developed a [website](#) with resources, including a video presentation in which I described how we got to this point and how the proposed governance would support the Strategic Plan and inclusion, diversity, equity and access. The site also included Frequently Asked Questions and invited all members to contribute input and ask questions. The House of Delegates continued the dialogue at their Fall 2021 September meeting.

Message to Members: Disaster Relief

In an August 31 email to members, Foundation Chair Becky Dorner and I wrote:

The thoughts and prayers of the entire Academy are with our fellow members who live in areas affected by Hurricane/Tropical Storm Ida. Our deep thanks go to emergency responders, volunteers and all those who are working to assist residents. The Foundation's Disaster Relief Fund is available to help support personal and professional life-rebuilding efforts of members, students and non-member credentialed practitioners who are affected by disasters. [Learn more about the fund and apply for assistance](#). The Foundation's ability to offer support during times of greatest need is directly attributed to the generosity of its donors: Please make a [donation](#) today to support your colleagues who have been affected by Ida. The Academy also offers substantial information and resources on [coping with a natural disaster](#), including food safety. Your Academy is committed to supporting our members in every way we can, and we especially stand with you now.

Academy Restates Recommendation: All RDNs and NDTRs Should Receive the COVID-19 Vaccine

In January, the Academy urged eligible members to receive the COVID-19 vaccine to help minimize the spread of the virus. In July, with rates of COVID cases – particularly the Delta variant – rising in some locations, the Academy reiterated our recommendation that all registered dietitian nutritionists and nutrition and dietetics technicians, registered be vaccinated, both to protect their own health and to assist in the treatment and recovery from the COVID-19 virus for all people.

Academy Joins Anti-Hunger Advocates at Summer Meals Event

President-elect Ellen Shanley represented the Academy during [June 17 event](#) in Connecticut to advocate for continued investment in federal Child Nutrition Programs. Gov. Ned Lamont joined groups and educators in focusing on the importance of access to healthful school meals throughout the year. The Academy continues to advocate for policies that provide a system of nutrition support and are a critical line of defense against food insecurity for millions of children.

Member Appointed Connecticut Education Commissioner

Academy member and RDN Charlene Russell-Tucker, has been [named](#) the Connecticut state education commissioner by Gov. Ned Lamont. Russell-Tucker has worked in the Department of Education for more than 20 years, including as deputy commissioner and acting commissioner.

Academy Champions Significant Policy Change for Nutrition Security

In August, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced major changes to SNAP benefits as a result of updates to the Thrifty Food Plan. The review concluded that additional resources are needed for program participants to consume healthy and nutritious foods in accordance with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The Academy has been at the forefront of this policy change, working with strategic partners and the USDA. This significant policy change championed by the Academy and many others in the nutrition security arena has positively shaped the health of our nation and contributes to the fulfillment of the Academy's strategic goals.

Current Board Public Member Jim Weill, former Public Member Kevin Concannon and I provided support to create the Academy's messaging on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's need to re-evaluate the Thrifty Food Plan. "[How Academy Members Can Help Make the SNAP Program Nutritionally Stronger](#)" provides a comprehensive overview of TFP and the importance of making updates to a plan that had not been reviewed since 2006. We also provided input for the [recommendations](#) the Academy submitted this past June for USDA to consider when updating TFP, which included conducting the review using a cultural humility lens; aligning the plan with the most recent iteration of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*; and reflecting current food prices and the economic environment. Jim Weill, who also serves on our Legislative Public Policy Committee, reviewed the Academy's [press release](#) applauding USDA's modernization of TFP, which is a crucial step to address nutrition insecurity in the United States.

Hill Briefing: Older Adult Nutrition Security and COVID-19

On August 25, the Academy co-hosted a [Hill briefing](#) on Older Adult Nutrition Security with ASPEN, Defeat Malnutrition Today and the Healthcare Nutrition Council. The briefing featured remarks from MNT Act champion U.S. Senator Susan Collins (Maine) and myself. I discussed top Academy policy priorities during the briefing for congressional staff: "Older Adult Nutrition Security: Next Steps for Congress."

ICD 2021

On August 31, I participated in the general member meeting of the International Confederation of Dietetic Associations during the [2021 International Congress of Dietetics](#), along with RDNs Judy Rodriguez and Tatyana El Kour, our Academy representatives to ICDA. The general member meeting was held just prior to the ICD 2021, held virtually on September 1-3. A number of Academy members presented sessions at the ICD 2021. Academy members and their ICD sessions included:

- *Global Status of School Meals and the Impact of COVID-19*: Donna Martin
- *What is dietary counselling? Consensus around definitions of dietary counselling in the management of disease-related malnutrition*: Alison Steiber
- *Different countries, different stories and different journeys towards a common Nutrition Care Process and Terminology*: Angela Vivanti, Constantina Papoutsakis
- *Innovative approaches to elevate professional training: Continuing education, master's and doctorate in clinical nutrition*: Judith Rodriguez, Catherine Christie, Lauri Wright, Andrea Arikawa
- *Experiences and reflections when incorporating the Nutrition Care Process and Terminology into electronic health records*: Angela Vivanti, Luise Persson Kopp, Jessie Pavlinac
- *Forging new frontiers in public health research and development with the nutrition care process*: Patricia Splett, Lauri Wright

- *Evidence-based nutrition practice guidelines: a targeted approach to interventions:*
Deepa Handu, Alison Steiber
- *Global dietitian initiatives: IAAND colleagues advance professional practice:*
Rubina Hakeem, Winnie Chee, Prajakta Khare-Ranade
- *Teaching NCP/NCPT and NFPE across the curriculum, including international innovations:*
Judith Rodriguez; Lauri Wright; Laurene Boateng.

Academy Represented at HIMSS Conference

RDN Margaret Dittloff represented the Academy in August at the Healthcare Information and Management Systems virtual conference and exhibition. HIMSS has supported the Academy's nutrition informatics initiatives, including representation from the Academy on task forces including the HIMSS TIGER (Technology Informatics Guiding Education Reform) community and its virtual learning environment.

Appointments to BMI Quality Measure Panel

Academy members and RDNs Kimi McAdam and Christopher Messenger have been appointed to the Mathematica Expert Work Group which convened in August to review the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services quality measure-Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening and Follow-Up Plan.

Healthy School Meals for All

Academy President-elect Ellen Shanley and I met with USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack on September 2 to discuss Healthy School Meals for All, emphasizing the inextricable link between good nutrition and academic outcomes. Collaborators included National Education Association, American Federation of Teachers, Food Research and Action Center, Children's Defense Fund, School Nutrition Association and Urban School Food Alliance.

Member Featured on *Top Chef Amateurs*

Academy member and RDN Bettina J. Applewhite, area supervisor at Baltimore (Md.) County Public Schools, was [featured](#) on the August 12 episode of Bravo's *Top Chef Amateurs*.

Malnutrition Quality Measure Receives NQF Endorsement

The Academy's stewarded measure, the [Global Malnutrition Composite Score](#), was [endorsed](#) unanimously in June by the National Quality Forum's Consensus Standards Approval Committee. Endorsement indicates a measure is "best in class" and brings the GMCS one step closer to a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services federal program adoption. The final NQF report will be published in September.

New: Revised Standards of Professional Performance for RDNs in Management of Food and Nutrition Systems

The [Revised 2021 Standards of Professional Performance for RDNs \(Competent, Proficient and Expert\) in Management of Food and Nutrition Systems \(MFNS\)](#) was published in the June *Journal*. Focus Area SOP and SOPP are tools used by RDNs for self-evaluation, professional development and advancement of practice. The SOPP for RDNs in MFNS highlights include expanded guidance on laws, regulations and standards; updated practice setting examples with descriptions of practitioners at each level of practice; and a restructured and expanded resource figure.

Updated Scope and Standards Learning Modules

The [Scope of Practice Learning Module](#) and [Standards of Practice Learning Module](#) gives an overview and highlights new additions to the Scope/Standards of Practice for the RDN and for the NDTR, as well as walks through practical applications with case studies.

Opportunity for RDNs: Achieve Health Equity through Nutrition Risk Improvement Activity

The improvement activity “Implement Food Insecurity and Nutrition Risk Identification and Treatment Protocols” was included in the [CY 2022 Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule](#) in July for participation in the [Merit-based Incentive Payment System](#). The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services classifies the improvement activity as Subcategory Achieving Health Equity and focuses on creating/improving and implementing protocols to identify and provide support to patients with or at risk for food insecurity and patients with or at risk for poor nutritional status.

Implementation actions include: using the [Malnutrition Quality Improvement Initiative](#) quality measures and [toolkit](#); updating clinical decision support resources within the electronic health record; applying requirements for staff training on food security and nutrition; and engaging with community partners to facilitate referrals. Activities must be focused on patients at greatest risk for food insecurity and/or malnutrition, such as patients with low income who live in areas with limited access to affordable fresh food or who are isolated or have limited mobility.

Revised Quality Improvement 101 Education Package

The recently [Revised Quality Improvement 101 Education Package](#) includes a slide library with talking points, QI 101 recorded presentation and two case study examples featuring a practitioner project and a student/intern project. QI 101 assists practitioners, educators and preceptors in how to communicate and teach quality management concepts, resources and tools.

Careers in Quality

[Careers in Quality](#) highlights RDNs working in quality sectors and the education, skills and training needed to assume responsibilities and be successful in a career that focuses on Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement.

SUBMITTED BY: Kevin L. Sauer, PhD, RDN, LD, FAND